

Serial No. 10/824,588
Docket No. H64-169096M/KAS

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REMARKS

Applicants submit that this Amendment has been prepared in accordance with the Examiner's indication that the Amendment filed on November 30, 2006 will not be entered.

Applicants concurrently file herewith a Petition for Extension of Time for a one-month extension of time, and corresponding extension of time fee.

Claims 2-4, 6-8, 11, 12, 14, 16, 18 and 21-24 are all the claims presently pending in the application. Claims 1, 5, 9, 10, 15, 19 and 20 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 3, 4, 7, 8, 11, 12, 16-18, 21 and 22 have been amended to change their dependency in accordance with the cancellation of claims 1, 5, 9, 10, 15 and 19. Claim 13 has been amended into independent form.

Entry of this Amendment is believed proper since no new issues are being presented to the Examiner that would require further consideration and/or search. That is, claim 13 has merely been amended into independent form in accordance with the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter and claims 3, 4, 7, 8, 11, 12, 16-18, 21 and 22 have merely been amended to change their dependency to depend from allowed claims 2, 6, 23 and 24.

Applicants specifically state that no amendment to any claim herein should be construed as a disclaimer of any interest in or right to an equivalent of any element or feature of the amended claim.

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication that claims 2, 6, 23 and 24 are allowed and that claim 13 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

While Applicants maintain that all of claims 1-8 and 10-24 are allowable over any combination of the cited references, merely in an effort to speed prosecution and to place the Application in condition for immediate allowance, Applicants have amended allowable claim 13 into independent form and canceled claims 1, 5, 9, 10, 15, 19 and 20.

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Applicants submit that on November 30, 2006 Applicants filed an Excess Claim Fee Payment Form, and corresponding excess claim fee, for one (1) excess independent claim (i.e., for amending claim 13 into independent form). As indicated above, the Amendment filed on November 30, 2006 was not entered. Therefore, Applicants submit that it is not necessary to file an Excess Claim Fee at this time.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that claims 2-4, 6-8, 11, 12, 14, 16, 18 and 21-24, all the claims presently pending in the application, are patentably distinct over the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to pass the above application to issue at the earliest possible time.

Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in fees or to credit any overpayment in fees to Attorney's Deposit Account No. 50-0481.

Respectfully Submitted,

Date: January 8, 2007


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FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that I am filing this paper via facsimile, to Group Art Unit 2861, at (571) 273-8300, on January 8, 2007.

Respectfully Submitted,

Date: January 8, 2007



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